



IDPH News Release

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Binge Drinking in Iowa

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

Binge drinking is a problem in Iowa, affecting people of all ages, genders, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds. For men, binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks of alcohol on the same occasion. For women, it equates to having four or more drinks. People who binge drink often are at higher risk for injuries, sexually-transmitted diseases, neurological damage, and poor control of health issues like diabetes, liver disease, high blood pressure, and stroke and other cardiovascular diseases. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also indicate that binge drinkers are 14 times more likely to drive while impaired than non-binge drinkers.

In Iowa, more than 56 percent of adults report that they had at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days. While that level is only slightly higher than the national rate of 55.3 percent, Iowans report much higher rates of binge drinking. "Iowa is one of seven states in the nation that rank highest for the percentage of adults who binge drink," said Julie Hibben, Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator at the Iowa Department of Public Health. "Binge drinking among Iowa youth is also an issue. Twenty-one percent of high school junior boys and 18 percent of junior girls report that they binge drank in the last 30 days."

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. The Iowa Department of Public Health's Division of Behavioral Health encourages all Iowans to educate themselves on the consequences of binge drinking. For more information on alcohol use and binge drinking, please visit www.idph.state.ia.us/.

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